Western Week

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Out of Manitoba Comes the first man-made plant

The first man-made grain has been developed by scientists at the University of Manitoba and it may be one of the most significant breakthroughs of the twentieth century. Triticale (prounounced trit-i-cay'lee) is the first crop species ever deliberately created by man and it holds a tremendous new hope for the hungry people of the world. The strange new plant produces a giant grain-heavy head at least twice as large as an ordinary head of wheat and the grain is super rich in protein. It is a cross between rye and wheat and has the ability to reproduce its giant self generation after generation. Large scale testing is just beginning but results have been most promising yield wise. Last year yields ran as high as 55 bushels per acre in southwestern Manitoba where yields of normal wheat were 40.

Plant breeding scientists has to struggle over a long and often discouraging trail in their efforts to find an improved grain. They knew that common bread wheat was born in Asia Minor something like 10,000 years ago when a primitive, grasslike wheat crossbred with a type of goat grass through an accident of nature. Such natural crossbreedings nearly always produce a sterile plant, but through some unknown force of nature this one allowed the genetic elements in the new grain to arrange themselves in such a way that the plant could produce fertile seed. The result was wheat. Originating a new species has taken nature a million year or more, but scientists kept thinking - how can we re-evolve wheat and give it better ancestors?

They felt the rye might make an ancestor far better than goat grass, and many years ago plant breeders began work on cross breeding the two grains. Sometimes they got them to mate, but the plant always produced sterile seed. The problem was that wheat has 14 chromosomes in its sex cells and rye only 7, and when brought together they strung out as 21 chromosomes. Without pairs to divide the wheat-rye plant couldn't produce sex cells to reproduce itself.

In 1937 botanists discovered a drug that could cause a plant to double it's genetic machinery inside the cell. It was tried on the wheat-rye plant and worked.

With this large barrier overcome, scientists around the world began experimenting anew with the rye-wheat crossbreeding, but results were discouraging.... they failed to come up with a healthy plant, and work on the project was almost abandoned.

In 1953 two wealthy young Canadians, Edgar and Charles Bronfman who had grown up on the plains of Manitoba got interested. From a small start their father had worked his way from the farm to hotel ownership and then into the distilling business which he built into the vast Seagrams empire and a family fortune of over 3 million. In 1953 the two Bronfman boys decided to use some of this fortune to memorialize their maternal grandfather, Samuel Rosner who had died in the fall of 1952. The result was the establishment of the Rosner Chair in Agronomy at the University of Manitoba.

Leonard Shebeski who was head of the plant science department thought the Rosner chair should undertake some research into helping the food shortage and work on Triticale was begun at the University, under veteran plant breeder John N. Welsh, and after his death in 1964, Dr. Edward Larter. The weak spots in earlier strains were gradually weeded out till the huge-headed new Triticale was developed. As yet the University has only a few lines of Triticale ready for large-scale field tests, but already the new grain's potential in fighting hunger is being explored by the Rockefeller Foundation's Agricultural Service in countries including India, Egypt, Chile and others. The extra protein will play an important role. An Asian child could not eat enough rice, for instance, to take in the needed amount of protein for a growing person.

At the University of Manitoba research goes on in another exciting direction. The possibility of a perennial grain - a wheat that would grow each year without seeding. There is still a long way to go on this project. But by 1970 the University hopes to have at least one variety of Triticale ready for commercial distribution to farmers.

This summer millions of people will see the new grain at Expo in the "Man the Provider" area. It may be the most remarkable of all the amazing things to see at "Man and his World" Expo.

A fat, whiskered head of Triticale grain makes the head of common wheat at left seem puny by comparison.

Take a one-day sea voyage

Leave cares behind

Photos and Story by
Eric D. Sismey

You may not recognize the flag fluttering from the staff over the stern of that large freighter moving slowly along Alberni Inlet not a hundred yards from where you are fishing close to Long Tree Point. You may not be able to read her name for it may be in Greek letters or Japanese characters.

Big Freighters, about one a day, come to Port Alberni to load lumber and plywood, pulp and paper for ports around the world.

A smaller cargo ship, Scottish built, Mv. Lady Rose, makes turn-around trips, alternately, to Bamfield or Ucluelet five days a week.

There are a few opportunities left now to take day-long salt water voyages because trucks and cars and planes have taken their jobs away. There is only one left on all the B. C. Coast, that one is along Alberni Inlet, through Barkley Sound to points where the open Pacific touches our western shore.

During the summer tourists from as far as Los Angeles and San Francisco visit the Albernis especially to make this round-trip cruise extensively written up in California periodicals. Too few Canadians, east of the mountains are aware of this salt sea excursion and for those who have never seen the open ocean either of these trips will remain as a long remembered day as well as an interlude in a tyee salmon fishing holiday.

Every morning, Monday through Friday, the 200 ton Clyde built motorship Lady Rose drops her lines promptly at 8:00 o'clock for an all day, round trip cruise to Bamfield of Ucluelet.

The Lady Rose, owned jointly be Captain R. McMinn and Captain E. Montrufet, is

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TAKE A ONE-DAY

Cont. from Pge. 1

essentially a cargo carrier, she will nose ashore wherever there is freight to deliver or passengers to land.

It is always interesting to board the ship early, not because here 100 passenger accommodation is crowded but because it is almost educational to watch cargo of every sort lowered and stowed in her yawning hold.

For a trifle, six dollars to be exact, round trip passengers enjoy unrivalled scenery along Alberni Inlet, through the Islands of Barkley Sound and to out-of-the-way camps and settlements, some at the end of restricted roads, others reached only by sea or air.

Moments after leaving Port Alberni the sight and sound of industry is left behind and the forested hills bordering the narrow inlet appear much the same as they did in 1791 when early explorers were there.

During the day long voyage, except for the hour or so ashore at Bamfield or Ucluelet, you may, perhaps for the first time, enjoy complete relaxation while lolling in a deck-chair enjoying the sun, scenery, the sea air and conversation with fellow trippers.

It takes about an hour to reach Nahmint Bay where the Lady Rose is often way laid by a power cruiser from a sport fishing resort. Usually two or three large tyee salmon are stretched across her fore deck, purposely, no doubt, to excite round trippers.

The first regular stop on the Bamfield run is Kildonan on picture-book Uchuckleset Inlet. Twenty years ago Kildonan was a busy place but after pilchard disappeared in 1946, the B.C. Packer's Plant was shut down, the machinery salvaged and when the buildings began to tumble they were burned. Now that blackberry bushes hide the scars of man's occupation the inlet has recovered much of its pristine beauty. There is a logging camp tucked behind Cheeyah Island and a number of retired people have chosen waterfront property for year round living.

Soon after leaving Kildonan the Lady Rose enters Barkley Sound named by Captain Charles William Barkley in 1791. His wife, Frances, was the first white woman to land anywhere on our northwest coast.

During the cruise through Trevor Channel, the shipping route between Port Alberni and the open Pacific it is well to visit the snack bar so that the hour at Bamfield can be spent ashore. Our ship berths in Bamfield Inlet opposite a large brick building where the Pacific cables to Australia terminate. Until a few years ago a large operating staff attended the clattering equipment for 24 hours a day. Now that the buildings house only repeaters in the circuits to Vancouver the buildings are deserted except for a small maintenance crew.

Two general stores at Bamfield will excite landlubbers for on tables, on shelves and in bins are the things that fishermen buy; slickers, so'westers and rubber boots, hooks and line spoons, plugs and gaudy wiggly coho lures called "hoochy-coochies".

Cont. on Pge. 3

Mv. Lady Rose in Bamfield Inlet.

Approaching Ucluelet, Ucluelet Inlet, aboard the Lady Rose.

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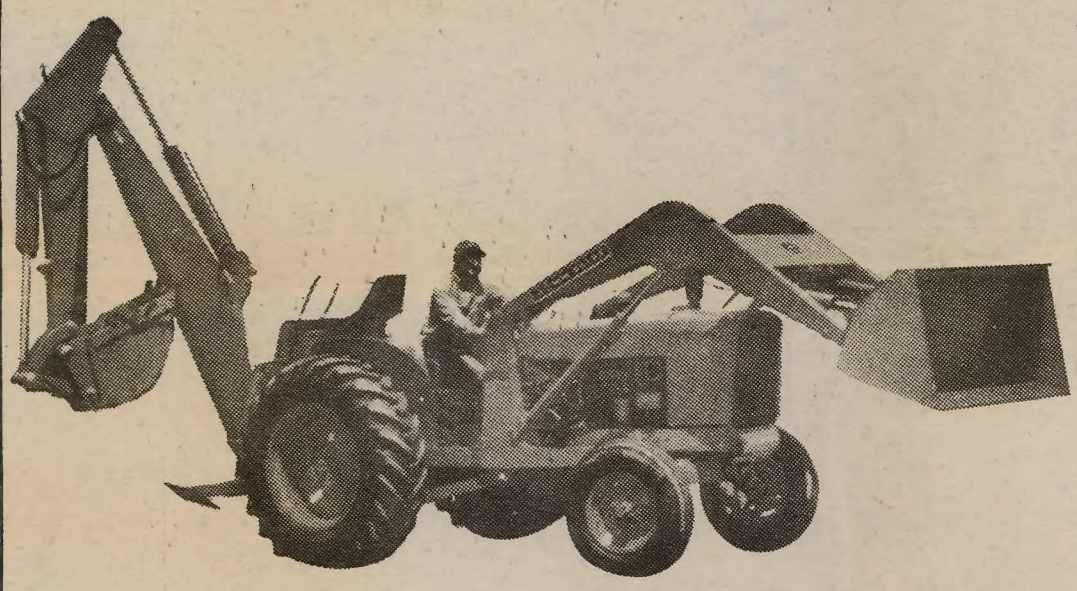

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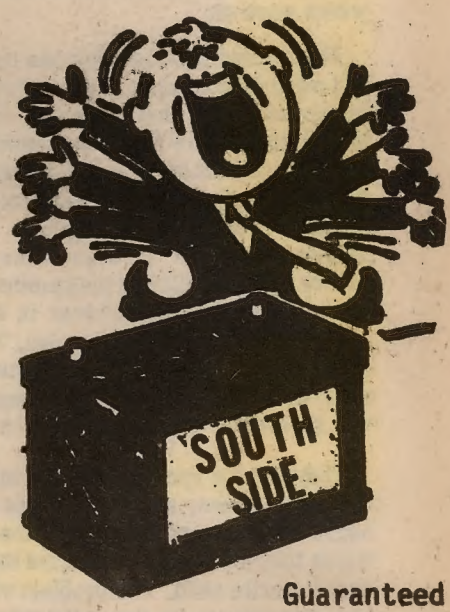

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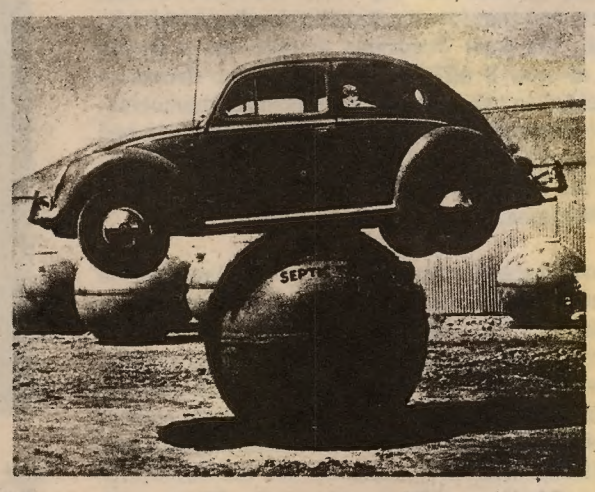

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B. C. Packer's float at Bamfield. Trevor Channel Barkley Sound may be seen in the middle distance.

TAKE A ONE-DAY
Cont. from Pge. 2

Bamfield is the home of one of the two west coast lifeboat stations where the orderly buildings and well clipped lawns seem out of place against a backdrop of primeval forest. The B.C. Packer's float where fisher men land their catch for packing and shipping is an interesting place to visit. Bamfield is also the home port of a number of off-shore trollers; for others a convenient fuel station where supplies may be bought and the catch sold. It is a haven, too, when the weather outside goes wild.

The trip to Ucluelet is slightly longer. It threads through the jumble of islands in the Broken group before crossing the head of Loudon Channel. When the Lady Rose reaches Newcombe Channel she pitches easily to swells that have rolled across the Pacific and surf creams over the rocky guardians to Ucluelet Inlet. From the shelter of Frances Island it is two or three miles to Ucluelet. The two sides of the narrow channel offer a study in contrasts. At the rambling Indian village, on the right, fiber glass runabouts with large outboard engines are beached beside native dug-outs, and some of these carry outboard engines too.

In Ucluelet, on the left, home of about 1000, the old is mixed with the new. An old style general store is near the wharf while further up the hill are new self-service stores. Settlement began in the early 1880's. Most of the early pioneers were attracted by reports of fine gold in the beavh sand at Wreck. now Florencia Bay. Some $20,000. is said to have been recovered over a period of several years. And while storms have washed away all trace of the old workings the search goes on.

Fishing is Ucluelet's primary industry, it is not only the home port of a large west coast trolling fleet, but a center where every kind of marine service is available.

A stroll along the floats where trollers home from the sea are tied, one against another, offers opportunity to examine the complexity of trolling gear and to engage in worthwhile conversation with men who wrest a living from the sea.

Return trips from both Bamfield and Ucluelet are the reverse of the outbound course. Passages, islands and bordering hills, when seen from the opposite direction are as fresh as the promise of tomorrow.

Along the busy seaway trollers, with poles out stretched, fish for salmon, deep sea tugs tow log-laden barges towards Port Alberni and ocean freighters sail to reach the Pacific before the sun sinks below the rim of the world.

Too soon the tall stacks of Alberni industry appear to signal the end of adventure as the Lady Rose threads her way through sport fishing boats off-shore from Lone Tree Point. In a few minutes at the wharf again, round trippers will take leave of genial Captain McMinn and his crew who have made the voyage a delight, to step ashore thoroughly relaxed, a bit wind burned perhaps, and in time for an early dinner.

BACK AGAIN

When it comes time for Klondike Days, the 1,970 miles between Detroit, Mich and Edmonton are nothing.

Take this from Miss Kathryn Bowman of Detroit and Miss Helen Van Gallow, of nearby Draeborn, Mich. Miss Gallow is a retired school teacher and Miss Bowman is assistant principal of a 1,200 pupil school for Negro children in Detroit

They came to Klondike Days, 1966, compiled a huge scrapbook of K-Days events and decided to come back again this year for the entire nine days. They have collected more ammunition for an even bigger scrapbook this year.

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Climate of the French Riviera did not gain international fame until the 19th century. Wealthy Englishmen escaping from fog and Russian noblemen fleeing blizzards were the first to arrive. Today the Riviera welcomes all classes in all seasons.

* * *

Reptiles eat little in relation to their body weight. They get most of the heat they need from outside their bodies — by basking in the sun, for instance.

* * *

Caroline Islanders in the Pacific Ocean do a lively business in the giant clamshells sought now by many shell and curio collectors.

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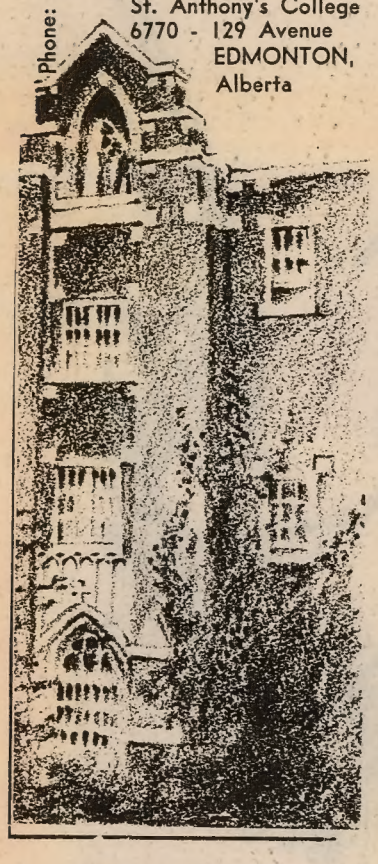

Off-shore salmon trollers at Ucluelet. The long poles, four on the larger vessels, are dropped as outriggers when trolling. Some trollers will fish eight lines with as many as a dozen lures on each line.

Trolling gear. Lines are raised and lowered mechanically. Spools of stainless steel lines are seen in the photograph. They are raised by a device called a "gurdy" which is geared to the main shaft and there is a bell on the pole which rings when a fish is hooked.

SOMETHING NEW IN SEPTIC TANKS

Century Fiberglass Ltd., Calgary, presents Satelite septic tanks, cesspools and cisterns, molded from lifetime fiber, reinforced, noncorrosive polyester plastic resin.

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